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Chief, Staff Intelligence Group

Situation Reports: Political Section

REFERENCES: a. Check List for CIG Situation Reports (issued early spring 1947)  
b. ONE Memorandum 41-47, dated 5 September 1947, subject: Check List for Political Section of Situation Reports

1. G/SI has received inquiries from your branch regarding the preparation of Situation Reports on the satellite countries, particularly of the political section. It is hoped that the suggestions below may be of use for this purpose.

2. Reference a is still the basic SR outline. Like any other structural guide, it needs to be modified through expansion, contraction, or both to fit the needs of a particular subject, but it indicates the major topic headings and presents an example of the type of question to be answered. Reference b, though still current, is considered by this office to be over-elaborate for the purpose.

3. The following are thought to be considerations of particular reference to the satellite states and might be considered as points supplemental to Reference a.

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a. We wish to re-emphasize the observation in [redacted]'s memorandum of 14 February 1947, that "each Situation Report should be individually tailored to fit the country or area under discussion....Those /items/ that have particular significance in each country or area should be emphasized; those that are of little or no significance should be either briefly noted or ignored."

b. We no longer recommend the last check-list, produced in 1948, so far as it refers to the political sections of situation reports. We feel that this outline is far too detailed, and that it contains items of slight concern to the purpose for which Situation Reports are prepared: to give a concise presentation of basic intelligence which bears significantly upon US security. While it agrees that such information may be of importance in the NIS series, we hold that there is no place for detail of this character in the Situation Report. We suggest, therefore, a return to earlier, simpler check-lists as the basis for preparing the political sections of Situation Reports.

4. The following suggestions of specific guidance in the preparation of Situation Reports on the satellite states are offered tentatively without intent to dictate content or even headings. They are based upon a check list produced in mid-1947. They pertain only to the satellite states.

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